

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 062127
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 062127

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, FI

SUBJECT:RELEASE OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

REF.: HELSINKI 531

FINAL TEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON FINLAND REQUESTED
REFTEL FOLLOWS.

BEGIN TEXT: I. POLITICAL SITUATION.

FINLAND IS A CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY WITH A LONG AND CON-
SISTENT TRADITION OF RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS.

II. LEGAL SITUATION.

BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS ARE GUARANTEED IN CHAPTER II OF THE CON-
STITUTION OF JULY 17, 1919 (AS AMENDED), INCLUDING THE
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RIGHT TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY SUBJECT TO THE APPLICABLE PRO-
VISIONS OF LAW. FINNISH LEGAL PROCESSES, ENFORCED BY AN
INDEPENDENT JUDICIARY, GIVE CIVIL LAW PROTECTION AGAINST
ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION.

III. OBSERVANCE OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS.

THE FINNISH OFFICIAL ATTITUDE TOWARD AND ACTUAL OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS ARE EXCELLENT. LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE SECURITY OF ALL FINNS ENJOY PROTECTION IN LAW AND IN PRACTICE. TORTURE AND CRUEL, INHUMAN DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT ARE NOT CONDONED. WITH REGARD TO ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION, THERE ARE LAWS ON THE FINNISH STATUTE BOOKS WHICH GIVE AUTHORITIES CONSIDERABLE SCOPE TO INTERPRET WHAT CONSTITUTES CRIMINAL ACTION. FOR EXAMPLE, A 1948 LAW PROVIDES FOR A MAXIMUM OF TWO YEARS IMPRISONMENT FOR PERSONS WHO INTENTIONALLY AND PUBLICALLY DEFAME A FOREIGN STATE BY ANY MEANS OF EXPRESSION JEOPARDIZING FINLAND'S RELATIONS WITH THAT STATE. THIS LAW, HOWEVER, ALSO PERMITS PERSONS ACCUSED OF CERTAIN CRIMES (E.G., ESPIONAGE) TO BE TRIED IN SECRET. THESE LEGAL PROVISIONS ARE USED SCRUPULOUSLY AND, TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL BASIC RIGHTS ENJOYED IN OPEN TRIALS ARE OBSERVED.

ALL OTHER IMPORTANT FREEDOMS ARE ENJOYED, RESPECTED AND PROTECTED UNDER FINNISH LAW.

IV. OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTING.

FREEDOM HOUSE LISTS FINLAND AS "FREE". END TEXT.
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